

Our Reference: JPL-102-B

PATENT

**METHOD FOR MAKING AN AUTHENTIC-LOOKING ANIMAL GOLF
CLUB HEAD COVER**

[0001] This application claims priority of provisional patent application 60/463,669 filed on April 17, 2003.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The invention is a method for making an authentic looking animal golf club head cover.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] There are numerous designs of golf club head covers available for consumer purchase. Although all golf club head covers are intended to protect the golf club heads, and especially the wood clubs, from damage during transport or other movement of the golf club bag, it is generally desirable to have an aesthetically appealing golf club head cover as well as a functional

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0004] The description herein makes reference to the accompanying drawings wherein like reference numerals refer to like parts throughout the several views, and wherein:

[0005] Figure 1 shows the step of printing exterior fabric with a predetermined animal print for making the authentic looking animal golf club head cover of the present invention;

[0006] Figures 2A - 2C show the steps of making a mold for a rigid foam head or body insert of the predetermined animal;

[0007] Figure 3 is an exploded view showing an outer shell formed from the printed exterior material and an inner pocket for the golf club head cover;

[0008] Figure 4A shows an elevational view of the outer shell with the rigid foam head insert inside of the outer shell;

[0009] Figure 4B shows an elevational view of the attachment of the inner pocket to the rigid foam head insert;

[0010] Figure 5 shows the step of attaching certain exterior features to the outer shell of the golf club head cover.

[0011] Figures 6A - 6C shows the final assembly steps for construction of the golf club head cover including filling certain cavities with filler and the final sewing of certain features; and

[0012] Figure 7 shows a perspective view of an assembled golf club head cover.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0013] With reference to the Figures 1 - 7, the present invention provides a decorative head cover 10 for protection of a wood golf club head (not shown) and a portion of the golf club shaft 100. The decorative head cover 10 provides an authentic-looking rigid animal head for receiving the golf club head. The rigid animal head is covered in soft plush material 12 with markings to represent a predetermined animal, so that the final assembled golf club head cover 10 is configured as an authentic- looking animal head.

[0014] One of the first steps in the construction of the authentic-looking animal golf head cover 10 is to screen print the material 12 (Figure 1) which will be used to form the outer shell 16. The material is made of a soft plush material 12, similar to the outer material used for stuffed animals, to represent the fur or feathers of the predetermined animal. The material 12 is screen printed by conventional methods to print the facial and body markings 14 of the predetermined animal thereon. The material 12 is cut in the shape of the predetermined animal's head and at least a portion of the animal's body so that the markings are appropriately oriented on the cut material. Multiple pieces of the plush material 12 are stitched together to form the contour of the animal's head for the outer shell 16.

[0015] A mock-up mold 18 of the head of the predetermined animal is made out of wood, plaster of Paris, or other conventional material. Facial details 20 are carved or otherwise formed into the mold as shown in Figures 2A and 2B. By conventional means, the mold 18 is used to make a plurality of the rigid inner shells or inserts 23 having an outer surface in the shape of the specific animal head. A preferred method of manufacturing the rigid inner shell 23 is to use foam pellets 22,

as shown in Figure 2B, so that the insert 23 is constructed of a durable but lightweight material. As shown in Figure 2C, the facial details 20 may also be carved into the rigid foam insert 23 as an alternative; or additional facial or body features may be carved into the rigid foam insert 23 to better enhance the likeness of the predetermined animal.

[0016] Figure 3 shows the interior cavity 24 of the outer shell 16 and the multiple pieces of the plush material stitched together to form the contour of the animal's head for the outer shell 16. Figures 3 and 4A, B further show a pocket 32 for insertion into the interior cavity 24. The pocket 32 is stitched to one end of a cylindrical sleeve 30 forming a seam 36. The cylindrical sleeve 30 preferably has a ribbed configuration to allow stretching of the sleeve when receiving the golf club head. The cylindrical sleeve 30 has a predetermined axial length for protecting a portion of the golf club shaft. The shaft sleeve 30 opens to the pocket 32. The pocket 32 is made of lightweight material that has a closed end 34 at an opposing end of the pocket from the seam 31. The pocket 32 is sized for receiving a golf club head (not shown). An elastic band 38 may be sewn around a gathered portion 40 of the pocket 32 to provide means for expansion when a golf club head is inserted therein and for fitting snugly around smaller golf club heads. The seam 36 between the sleeve 30 and pocket 32 is further sewn to a bottom edge 33 of the outer shell 16.

[0017] For assembly of the authentic looking animal golf club head cover, the rigid foam shaped insert 23 of the animal is inserted into the head portion 27 of the outer shell 16. The foam insert 23 is placed and positioned in the outer shell 16 to correspond with the features of the animal's face formed in the head portion 27. The foam shell insert 23 is held in place within the outer shell 16 by means of glue and sewing the rigid foam insert 23 directly to the inside surface of the outer shell 16. As can be seen in Figures 4A and 4B, the foam insert 22 has an interior cup-shaped configuration 25 so that the inner surface 42 of the foam insert 24 forms a cavity 25 for receiving the pocket 32 and a golf club head. The closed end 34 of the pocket 32 is stitched to a center portion 43 of the inner surface 42 as shown in Figure 4B to maintain the elongate feature of the pocket 32 and to prevent the pocket 32 from folding into the cylindrical sleeve 30.

[0018] To reduce movement or shifting of the pocket 32 and any insert golf club head within the golf club head cover 10, a polyester, cotton, or other soft fiber material stuffing 46 is inserted into the head portion 27 so that the stuffing 46 essentially is equally distributed around the pocket 32, as shown in Figure 6A. After the stuffing 46 has been inserted into the cavity 24, the cavity 24 may be closed by the final stitching between the head portion 27 and the body portion 26 of the outer shell 16, as shown in Figure 6C.

[0019] Various features of the animal head are glued and/or sewn to the outer shell 16 of the golf club head cover 10. In Figure 5, it is shown that teeth and mouth portions 48 of the animal are inserted into a cavity formed in the outer shell 16. Eyes 40, tusks, beaks, horns and other animal characteristics may also be glued and/or sewn to the outer shell either before or after the rigid foam shell 23 is inserted into the head portion 27 of the outer shell 16. The aforementioned features are made of at least one of glass, plastic, or rubber.

[0020] Figure 7 shows a perspective view of the finished products of one of the animal heads available for a animal golf club head cover 10. The rigid foam insert 23 provides better protection for the golf club head; more importantly, the rigid foam insert 23 maintains the authentic likeness of the animal that the golf club head cover 10 represents. Although only a couple animal likenesses are illustrated in this application, it is known that other animal likenesses can be represented in the authentic looking animal golf club head cover 10 of the present invention. The present invention has the advantage over soft and pliable shaped golf club head covers in that the shaped rigid inner shell makes the animal likeness more authentic. In addition, the shaped rigid inner shell 23 provides added protection to the golf club head with minimal added weight to the overall golf club head cover 10.

[0021] While the invention has been described in connection with what is presently considered to be the most practical and preferred embodiment, it is to be understood that the invention is not to be limited to the disclosed embodiments but, on the contrary, is intended to cover various modifications and equivalent arrangements included within the spirit and scope of the appended claims, which scope is to be accorded the broadest interpretation so as to encompass all such

modifications and equivalent structures as is permitted under the law. Although the use of the rigid foam insert is disclosed for use with a golf club head cover, the rigid foam insert could also be used in the manufacture of stuffed animals to provide more authentic-looking animals than previously provided.